



NDSA-07-2122

A Resolution Supporting Additional Time Off During the Fall Semester

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) represents the voice of North Dakota's 45,000 public college and university students; and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of NDSA is to represent all students enrolled in the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and advocate on issues of higher education in support of access, affordability, quality, and the student experience; and,

WHEREAS, the NDUS Academic Calendar has eighty scheduled days of classroom instruction required for students in the fall semester ^[1]; and,

WHEREAS, of these required classroom instruction days, forty-seven of them take place consecutively without a break for students ^[1]; and,

WHEREAS, these forty-seven consecutive classroom instruction days take place September through November ^[1]; and,

WHEREAS, data from an NDUS institution indicates that the highest utilization of campus counseling services throughout the year occurs from September through November ^[2]; and,

WHEREAS, seven weeks of uninterrupted classroom instruction days can lead to increased "suicidal ideations, attempts, depression, anxiety, and stress ^[3];" and,

WHEREAS, to promote the mental and physical wellbeing of students, the NDUS has an opportunity to change systemwide policy to create an additional day off for students in the middle of the seven-week period; and,

WHEREAS, the NDUS also has an opportunity to change the culture surrounding mental wellness across the state; and,

WHEREAS, according to a 2021 report from the National Academics of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine titled *Mental Health, Substance Use, and Wellbeing in Higher Education* "Universities and colleges need to take a new approach to mental health challenges – changing their cultures to emphasize shared responsibility and a holistic understanding of what it means in practice to support students ^[4];" and,

[1] [file:///C:/Users/fwahl/Downloads/Academic-Calendar-2021-2022%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/fwahl/Downloads/Academic-Calendar-2021-2022%20(2).pdf)

[2] [Counseling Services Numbers graphs from Fall 2019 to Spring 2021](#)

[3] Kelsey Carter, M. Ed.; LPCC

[4] https://www.nap.edu/resource/26015/ReportHighlights_Student_MentalHealth_FINAL.pdf



WHEREAS, the NDUS is the “only university system in the region that has sixteen weeks of a semester rather than fifteen weeks ^[3]”; and,

WHEREAS, the process of adding a day off of classroom instructions for students was completed in the last five years, resulting in the Wednesday before Thanksgiving no longer being a day of classroom instruction ^[3]; so,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the North Dakota Student Association asks the North Dakota University System to consider creating a break in classroom instruction in October.

Approved by the North Dakota Student Association General Assembly,

Saturday, November 20th , 2021

[1] [file:///C:/Users/fwahl/Downloads/Academic-Calendar-2021-2022%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/fwahl/Downloads/Academic-Calendar-2021-2022%20(2).pdf)

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